A

SERMON

Preach'd at

CROSBY-SQUARE, Jan. 8. 1692.

Upon the

FUNERAL

Of that Faithful Servant of Christ,

Mr. John Reynolds,

Who Died in the Lord the preceding 25 *Decemb.*

By SAMUEL SLATER, Minister of the Gospel.

LONDON,

Printed for J. *Lawrence* at the *Angel* in the *Poultrey*.

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TO

Mris. Reynolds.

Dear Sister,

ALL these things shall be dissolved, the very Heaven and Earth, and so must our Relations, however delightful, for they are only for a time. Death with its cold hand will easily loose the straitest Knot that coupled the most suitable and affectionate Pair: You frequently have heard and seen it, now you feel it. God hath been pleased to make a breach upon you, Oh that he would fill it up by standing himself in it: By the Father of Mercies, and God of Bowels, great and precious Promises are made to the solitary Widow, which are Yea and Amen; sue them out by Prayer, and live upon them by Faith. It is well with your Deceased Husband, and whatever straits and Difficulties you may for a time meet with, I hope it will be so with you. What I heartily pray for you, is, that you may have a full Enjoyment of God in the end, and receive Supports from him by the way, together with fresh and full supplies of Grace, Peace and Com-

fort. You by and with your Son desir'd the printing of the following Discourse, I could not deny you: Now it sees the light, may it do good to you, and many more through the Blessing of God accompanying it; which will be the Rejoycing of

Your Sympathizing Friend and Brother,

From my Study,
Jan. 19. 9⅔

Samuel Slater.

Newly published, and sold by John Lawrence *at the* Angel *in the* Poultrey.

A Sermon Preached on the Thanksgiving-day, the 27*th.* of *October*, 1692. at *Crosby-Square*. By *Samuel Slater*, Minister of the Gospel. *Quarto.*

A good Minister of Jesus Christ. A Funeral Sermon for the Reverend Mr. *Richard Steel*, a Faithful and Useful Minister of the Gospel. Delivered *Novemb.* 27. 1692. By *George Hamond*, M. A. and Minister of the Gospel. *Octavo.*

Mr. *Addy*'s Short-Hand is newly Re-printed, the Bible being Printed in the same Short-hand. *Octavo.*

[redacted]

2 Sam. I. 26.

I am distressed for thee, my Brother Jonathan, very pleasant hast thou been unto me.

THE last Chapter of the former Book of *Samuel*, gives us an account of a Battle fought between the *Philistines* and *Israel*, in which the former had the Victory, and the latter were put to flight, no less than three of *Saul*'s Sons were slain, and alas! of them *Jonathan* was one; and *Saul* to avoid being killed and abused by such loathed hands, took a Sword and fell upon it, which however it may be by some applauded as a Brave and Heroick Action, was certainly unlawfull for him to do, wicked and abominable, whereby he became *Felo de se*, and brought upon himself the guilt of his own Blood; but as he had lived, so he dyed under the power of an evil Spirit.

The dolefull tydings hereof being by an *Amalekite* brought to *David*, it much affected and afflicted him, he lamented over them with a great Lamentation, of which the Words of my Text are a part; and in them two things present themselves to our Observation.

1. What *Jonathan* had been to *David* while he lived, *very pleasant*, and sweet, by consequence his Life was exceeding desirable.

2. What *David* found himself to be, now that his *Jonathan* had been so cut off, a poor distressed Man, *I am distressed for thee my Brother Jonathan*; for thee, *i. e.* for the loss which I, poor I have of thee, in whom so much of my Comfort was laid up. Thou art gone, for ever gone, thy

place will know thee no more, and I both do and ſhall dearly miſs thee. Although he was ſure ſhortly to poſſeſs the Throne of *Saul* the Father, yet he ſhould want the Company of *Jonathan* the Son. By how much the Life of *Jonathan* had of all outward Enjoyments been to him moſt ſweet, by ſo much was his Death of all Temporal Loſſes moſt grievous. *I am diſtreſſed for thee, my Brother Jonathan, very pleaſant haſt thou been unto me.* The Doctrinal Concluſion which I ſhall draw from theſe Words, and proſecute in the following Diſcourſe, will be this,

Doct. *When God doth take away from his own People their pleaſant things, it brings them into diſtreſs. Depriving Providences are diſtreſſing Providences.*

If you look into the 13 *Job* 26. you will find that good Man complaining to God, that *He did write bitter things againſt him*: If you ask, how did God do that? I Anſwer, by the hand of his Providence; though he had ſet down moſt precious things for him in his Eternal Purpoſes, yet he wrote bitter things againſt him in his preſent Diſpenſations. He had ſtript him of all his outward Comforts; his Eſtate was melted down, his Cattel driven away, his Servants ſlain, his Children all buried in the Ruines of the Houſe which fell upon them while they were Feaſting together: God had in this way brought him from Plenty to Penury, and from great Abundance to pinching Want. He took his pleaſant things from him, and in ſo doing he wrote bitter things againſt him.

Jonathan had been very pleaſant to *David*, his tender and immovable Love had very much ſweetened to him the implacable Hatred and violent Rage of *Saul* againſt him; but now his Death did imbitter his Enjoyments and Expectations, whatever he had in his Hand, whatever in his Hope, yet he had not his *Jonathan*; No, No, He is gone, He is gone never to return, *He is ſlain in his high places*, and therefore he lifts up a great and bitter Cry, *I am diſtreſſed.* There

are

are three things that I shall speak unto in the Doctrinal part, and then proceed to the Application, which I principally have in mine Eye. We shall enquire,

1. What rendered *Jonathan* so pleasant unto *David?*
2. What brought *David* into Distress?
3. What his being in Distress doth import and hold out to us?

We begin with the first of these, What was it that rendered *Jonathan* so very pleasant unto *David?* to this I Answer, There were sundry things which did happily concurr, and greatly contribute thereunto; so many remarkable things did unite and meet in that one excellent Person, so many singular Ingredients, as that they could not choose but make in him such a Composition of Sweets, as would make him the Pleasure and Delight of *David*'s Soul. You may take some of them in these following particulars.

First, *The nearness of that Relation in which he stood:* This is mentioned in the Text, *my Brother Jonathan:* Not that he was his Natural Brother, but by Marriage: Not Consanguinity but Affinity; *David* having married *Michal* the Daughter of *Saul*, and Sister of *Jonathan.*

But had this been alone, had it been all, it would not have been enough to make him so very pleasant: Many times Relations are bitter, they prove Burdens and Vexations to one another, and instead of rejoicing in the nearness of their Union, they could even Curse the first day of their Acquaintance. How often is the Wife a Thorn in the side of her Husband? such was *Job*'s Wife to him; the Child an Heart-break to his Father? such was *Absalom* to *David*; and the Brother an Affliction and Terror to his Brother? so *Esau* was to *Jacob*, and *Cain* to *Abel.* There must be something beside the Relation to sweeten it, otherwise the Persons related will be mutual Crosses and Torments, instead of being pleasant, 113 *Psal.* 1. *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for Brethren to walk together in Unity:* This is like the Precious Ointment, like the Dew of *Hermon*, the Dew that descended upon the Mountains of *Zion*; there God command-

eth the Bleſſing. It is not nearneſs of Relation, nor oneneſs of Blood, nor any other ſtrictneſs of Bond that will be ſufficient alone, but together with that there muſt be an oneneſs of Mind and Heart. Thus it ſhould be in Families, and thus in Churches, 2 *Acts* 42. *They continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, did eat their meat with gladneſs:* And again, 4 *Acts* 32. *The multitude of them that believed were of one Heart and of one Soul.* Brethren and UNITED BRETHREN, this is amiable indeed and delightfull, when they Dwell together, Meet and Converſe together, and all in Unity; ſo that there are no Animoſities and Heart-burnings among them, no Diviſions and contrary Motions, no Quarrels and Contentions, but Harmony and Agreement, this is *good*, a lovely ſight, God and Man count it ſo; and it is *pleaſant*, the Joy and Comfort of thoſe Perſons Lives. Well then, this was not all in the preſent Caſe; there was not only a nearneſs of Relation, but alſo

Secondly, *There was in Jonathan unto David a dearneſs of Affection.* Not only ſuch as was ſuitable to the Relation, but above it; ſuch as too too often is not to be found in an own Brother. For the proof of this, do but obſerve the expreſſions uſed in the Scripture for the ſetting of it out; 1 *Sam.* 18. 1. *When he had made an end of ſpeaking unto Saul, the Soul of Jonathan was knit with the Soul of David.* They were glewed together, faſtened one to another, and bound together by the Holy Spirit of God: There was between them, as the Philoſopher ſaith, but μία ψυχὴ one Soul; and read on, *Jonathan loved him as his own Soul*, which words are repeated in *Verſe* 3. He did really deſire his good as his own, and ſenſibly felt his Afflictions as his own, and heartily rejoyced in his Proſperity, Succeſſes and Honours, as if they had been his own; they rejoyced and mourned together; they ſung and ſighed, laugh'd and wept together. Again, it is ſaid in 1 *Sam.* 19. 2. That *Jonathan delighted much in David:* He was not only pleaſed with him, but he delighted in him too, and that not a little, but much: He was delighted to ſee his Face, and to hear his Diſcourſes, and to be in his Company.

David

David was ſenſible of this, could not but take notice of it, you may ſee he did in the words immediately following the Text, where he ſpeaks of it in an high and lofty ſtrain, that ſo he might the better ſhew the Price he himſelf ſet upon it, and raiſe up in others the greater Admirings of *Jonathan*. *Thy Love to me was wonderful, paſſing the love of women.* As if He were a Prodigy of Love, the None-ſuch of the Age, yea of the World, and had ſuch a pure and vehement Flame as could not poſſibly be matcht: Among men there was none to be found that came near it, nay it exceeded the Love of Women: Which may be variouſly underſtood, and is by the *Learned*. Either thus: Thy Love to me is above that which men have, yea that which thou, my deareſt Brother, hadſt for Women: Or thus, That Love, which was in thine heart unto me, was above the Love which is in the Heart of Women themſelves. Tho' they have ſtrong Affections, and violent Paſſions, yet they come ſhort of thine, are not to be compar'd with thine; the moſt endearing Wives do not love their Husbands, the moſt affectionate Mothers do not love their Children, the fruit of their own Wombs, at ſuch a rate, to ſuch a degree, as *Jonathan* did his *David*. Now this could not but make him very pleaſant, for Love is the Beauty of all Relations, it puts a ſweetneſs into, and a gloſs upon all Societies; yea it is the Glory of Heaven it ſelf, where it is advanced to, and ſhall Eternally continue in it's higheſt Perfection, without the leaſt languiſhing or diminution. But further, This Love of *Jonathan* to *David* was not dull and ſluggiſh, a ſleepy habit, but lively and active, haſtily catching at, and laying hold upon all opportunities offered for the venting and expreſſing of it's ſelf. And therefore,

Thirdly, *The Love of Jonathan did ſignally evidence its ſelf in a way of Self denyal, and by the unparallel'd humility of his Spirit.* He was no conceited and lofty Perſon, puffed up with Pride, wholly confin'd to his own Intereſt, and looking with contempt or jealouſie upon them who were below him; but moſt readily yielding to the intereſt of his Brother, and cheer-

cheerfully welcoming and embracing all means of promoting it. We may learn this from 1 *Sam.* 18. 4. *Jonathan ſtript himſelf of his Robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his Garments, even to his Sword, and to his Bow, and to his Girdle.* Good Man, he now would have his *David* go like himſelf, arrayed in a Courtly Habit, as became the Son-in-law to a King: He muſt put off the Shepherd, and put on the Prince, yea he ſhould have his own Robe; that all who met with him might ſee *Jonathan* in him, and accordingly reſpect and honour him as another *Jonathan*; yea, he gave him his very Girdle, or Belt, which was a great Enſign, or Badge of Honour, and the principal Ornament of a Souldier; thus he accounted nothing too good or too great for *David*. And tho' he full well knew that *David* ſhould ſucceed his Father in the Throne, and be King in *Iſrael*, yet he had no riſing of Heart againſt it, he did not at all envy him that Royal Preferment: No, no; 1 *Sam.* 23. 16. *He went to him into the Wood, and ſtrengthened his hand in God*: i. e. with the gracious Promiſes that God had given him, putting him in mind of former Aſſurances he had received, as is clear from the 17th. *Verſe, He ſaid unto him, fear not, for the hand of Saul my Father ſhall not find thee, and thou ſhalt be King over Iſrael, and I ſhall be next unto thee*: He was very well content not to inſiſt upon the *Right Line*, but tho' as Prince, Heir of the Crown, yet to reſign it to *David*, and to be himſelf his Inferior and Subject: Nor was he at all heated in his Spirit againſt him, or alienated from him in Affection by his Fathers angry taunts, and upbraiding him with his *having choſen the Son of Jeſſe to his own confuſion, and to the confuſion of his Mothers nakedneſs.* As if he ſhould have ſaid, Thou doſt by this means expoſe thy ſelf and thy Mother to reproach, none will look upon thee as my Son, but a Baſtard, and of ſome mean and baſe Original.

Fourthly, *Jonathan was true, and immoveably faithful to the intereſt of David.* He was a cordial and ſincere Friend, as did appear by his ſtedfaſtneſs: As he was united to him in Affection, ſo he would bind himſelf to him yet faſter by a

Cove-

Covenant. As in the 1 *Sam.* 18. 3. *Jonathan* and *David* made a Covenant, and they did again renew it, in the 20 *ch.* 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16, Verſes. Thus he added Obligation to Obligation, as if he thought he could never lay bonds enough upon himſelf, nor give unto *David* ſufficient aſſurance of his Sincerity and Faithfulneſs, and that never-dying Friendſhip and Kindneſs which he had with, and for him: He ſo loved *David*, that he feared himſelf, and was jealous of his own Heart, leſt it ſhould afterward prove falſe and treacherous, and therefore he would bind it to its good Behaviour.

Fifthly, *Such was the Love of Jonathan to David, that it put him upon being his Advocate.* Oh how ready and forward was he at every turn to appear on his behalf, and plead his Cauſe with his angry Father, tho' he knew him to be very jealous of him, and deſperately enraged and ſet againſt him, and could not but foreſee that his ſtanding up on his behalf would certainly bring his Fathers Diſpleaſure, Frown and Indignation upon himſelf, yet he was reſolved to act the part of a Friend and Brother to the utmoſt, and put his Life in his hand, and ſpeak, rather than by a timerous ſilence be wanting unto *David.* We find in the 1 *Sam.* 19. 1. that *Saul ſpake to Jonathan his Son, and to all his Servants, that they ſhould kill David:* He gave them Command and Commiſſion to do it, but notwithſtanding this, we read in the 4*th.* Verſe of the ſame Chapter, that *Jonathan ſpake good of David unto Saul his Father, and ſaid unto him, Let not the King ſin againſt his Servant, even againſt David, becauſe he hath not ſinned againſt thee, and becauſe his works have been to thee-ward very good.* It was an argument of dear Love, and a brave Spirit, to ſpeak ſo to his Father at ſuch a time. And he did the like again in the 1 *Sam.* 20. 31, 32. *As long, ſaith Saul, as the Son of Jeſſe liveth upon the ground, thou ſhalt not be eſtabliſhed, nor thy Kingdom, wherefore now ſend, and fetch him to me, for he ſhall ſurely dye.* What now! this went to *Jonathans* Heart, it was as a Sword in his Bones, the Fire burned; *Then ſpake he with his tongue, and ſaid unto his Father, wherefore ſhall he be ſlain? what hath he done?* i. e. What Evil hath

hath he done, what one thing hath he done for which he deſerves to dye? And it is ſaid, *ver.* 34. *He did eat no meat the ſecond day of the month, for he was grieved for David*: He could not but think of *David*'s Caſe, and when he did think of it, it could not be without great ſadneſs.

Sixthly, I ſhall add but this one thing further, *Jonathan was unto his David a ready and faithful Counſellor*: Ready to give him timely notice of any danger that threatned him, and to acquaint him with the true ſtate of things, and how matters went as to him, and to afford him the beſt Advice he could for the ſteering of his Courſe, and preſervation of himſelf in ſo critical a time. Thus in the 1 *Sam.* 19. 2. When *Saul* had declar'd his Will to have him butcher'd, *Jonathan* told him, *My Father ſeeketh to kill thee*; and thereupon directed him what to do, *I pray thee, take heed to thy ſelf until the morrow, and abide in a ſecret place, and hide thy ſelf.* And again afterward in the 20*th.* Chapter, by the Arrows which he ſhot, and the words which he ſpake to the Lad, he gave him to underſtand how exceeding hazardous his continuance thereabout would be, and how neceſſary it was for him to provide for his own Security as well as he could, and with all poſſible ſpeed; *Make ſpeed, haſte, ſtay not.* Shall we now take all theſe ſix Particulars, and bind them up togegether thus: Since *Jonathan* was in ſo near a Relation to *David* as his Brother, and did bear him ſuch a ſincere and entire Affection, could freely wave his own Intereſt, and lay it at the foot of *David*, continued ſo faithful to him, and at all times ready to plead for him, and carefull to give him the beſt Advice and counſel that he could, he muſt needs be very pleaſant, exceeding deſireable and delightful, he was very loving, and therefore very lovely.

But alas! *David* was not always to have his *Jonathan*; the knot is ſoon untied that had united and coupled this excellent pair. *Jonathan* hath breath'd his laſt, his Soul hath made it's eſcape out of his wounded Body, and taken its flight into the other World. *He is ſlain in his high places*, and that brought *David* into diſtreſs; and it brings me to the ſecond

cond thing which I promiſed to enquire into, *viz.* What was there in the Caſe, that *David* ſhould be ſo diſtreſſed? What Reaſon was there, that ſo Good a Man ſhould be in ſuch a plunge? Time was when we found him at *Ziklag*, 1 *Sam.* 30. which was burnt by the *Amalekites*, the Wives, and Sons and Daughters were taken Captives, and the People ſpake of ſtoning him, and then he pluck'd up a brave Spirit, and *encouraged himſelf in the Lord God.* How then comes it to paſs that upon this Occaſion, tho' ſad enough, he cryeth out of his being diſtreſſed? I ſhall give you my Anſwer in theſe three things.

Firſt, *I do not think he was brought into Diſtreſs by any Fears or dark Apprehenſions concerning the Eternal State into which* Jonathan *was now enter'd:* Surely he did not queſtion but he was now in the Boſom of Divine Love, though he had fallen by the Cruel hand of a barbarous Enemy, for he was a good Man; whoſoever reads the Story of his Life, and conſiders his Spirit and Carriage, will find therein ſufficient reaſon to conclude him not only truly gracious, but a Perſon of an excellent and more than ordinary Spirit, and from thence gather whatever was his *Exit* out of this World, He *had an entrance miniſtred to him abundantly into the glorious Kingdom of his God and Saviour:* His dying upon the *Mountains of Gilboa*, could not at all hinder his direct, ſpeedy, and joyfull aſcent to *the Mountains of Myrrhe and Beds of Spices*, where he ſhall take a ſweet and undiſturbed repoſe to all everlaſting. He had indeed his Head not incircled with a Crown, but laid in the Duſt, and ſo the earthly Throne was left for *David* to fill, but he was advanced to one much above it, a Throne of Glory in Heaven. I do not in the leaſt doubt that *David* was abundantly ſatisfi'd about the happy Exchange *Jonathan* had made, and the goodneſs of that Condition in which he now was, that if he might return again to be as he was before, he would not; nor leave the clear Viſion, and immediate Communion with the *Son and Lord of David*, for a freſh and further Enjoyment of *David* himſelf. Inſtead of making a deſcent to this lower, dirty and troubleſom World,

he would choose to continue where he now is, and take some delight in the thoughts of *David's* coming to him as soon as he had served his Generation according to the Will of God, and finished the Work given him to do. But

Secondly, *I judge him brought into this distress, by a reflection upon the manner of Jonathans Death*: That he did not Die in a Natural way, but was cut off in his prime and flourishing Age by a violent stroke, and that (which was Gall in the Cup) given by the hand of the Uncircumcised; it pained him at the very Heart, to think, that that brave Prince, who had been so eminently valiant and prosperous in fighting the Battels of *Israel*, whose *Bow turned not back from the blood of the slain, nor from the fat of the mighty*, had now fallen a Sacrifice to their Fury, and was become the Object of their boasting and triumph. Hence it is that he did, as in an Agony, cry out in the 20*th*. Verse of this Chapter, *Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in Askelon*: Conceal it from them, if it be possible conceal it from them, *lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoyce, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph*. Poor Soul, he knew not how to bear up under the thoughts of this, that those desperate Enemies to his God and People, should rejoyce in the fall of his beloved *Jonathan*, and with their unhallowed feet trample and dance upon his precious Dust. But then

Thirdly, *That which encreased his Distress, and did yet much more straiten him, was the Consideration of his own Loss*. We all know, that cordial Friends, of good humour, are the great Comfort of our Lives. Suppose a man hath a great confluence of mundane Delights, Waters of a full Cup wrung out to him, more indeed than Heart could wish, yet would he be miserable in the midst thereof, if he were Friendless. God did not think it good for Man to be alone, tho' in a Paradise: He enjoyeth himself pitifully, that hath not a Friend to enjoy. The Sacred Scripture speaking of a Friend, adds this Expression, 13 *Deuter.* 6. *Who is as thine own Soul*; i. e. as near and dear to thee as thy self, he is an *alter Ego*, another self, a second self: So that when an intimate

mate, entire Friend is taken away by Death, a Man is almoſt torn in pieces, and loſeth a very conſiderable part of himſelf. The wiſeſt of Men tells us in the 17 *Proverbs* 17. *A Friend loveth at all times, and a Brother is born for adverſity.* This was verified in *Jonathan*, he was ſuch a Brother, endearing *David* in the cleareſt Sunſhine, and under the blackeſt Clouds, in fair Weather and foul, in Halcion days, and moſt tempeſtuous bluſtering Storms, being always the ſame, whatever Changes were to be found abroad; he being tryed by Adverſity, was found faithful. When his Father was his implacable Enemy, he was his faſt Friend; *Saul* could not be more reſolved to ruine him, than *Jonathan* was ſtudious of ſaving him. He ſtuck to *David*, and would not leave him, any more than *Ruth* would her afflicted Mother-in-law *Naomi*, who ſpake thus to her, 1 *Ruth* 17. *Where thou dieſt will I die, and there will I be buried, the Lord do ſo to me, and more alſo, if ought but death part thee and me.* His Fathers Enmity and Hatred of *David* could not part them; if for that he did not love him the better, for certain he pityed him the more. His Fathers Diſpleaſure and Indignation againſt him for loving of *David*, could not part them: But Death came, it may be, unexpectedly, and by way of ſurprize, and did that which nothing elſe could do, it parted them, and now whatever Friends *David* ſtill had about him, he had loſt the beſt. He had not his *Jonathan*, among all the reſt he could not find one like *Jonathan*; and therefore when he thought of it, yea dwelt in his thoughts upon it, as he could not chooſe but do, he found himſelf wounded, and in pain, ſo that he could not forbear crying out in our Text, *I am diſtreſſed for thee my Brother.* So we are got to the third and laſt thing which I ſaid was to be enquired into, *viz.* The import of the word: What may we look upon as the meaning of *David*, when he ſaith, *He was diſtreſſed?* I ſhall give you my Thoughts of it in theſe two things. By this word he intimates

1. The greatneſs of the Loſs he ſuſtained.
2. The intimate ſenſe he had of it.

First, *By saying he was distressed, he signifieth the greatness of the Loss, the soreness of the Affliction.* It lay heavy upon him, being no common stroke, nó ordinary blow; not the blasting of a sorry Gourd, but withering a Plant of Renown, a principal Stud was faln. This was such a loss, as every one could not meet with; none but a *David* could lose, so lose his *Jonathan*. It must be granted, his Death was a publick Loss, all Good Men had a share in it, but his own was more than double. His *Brethren* had a Loss, let their Eyes be fountains of Tears; his *Family* had a Loss, let them put on Sackcloth, and be cloathed in Mourning; all *Israel* hath had a Loss, let them hang their Harps upon the Willows, but their Loss, put them all together, is not comparable to mine, mine is by far the greatest: I have lost my Right Hand: I have lost my Companion, my Counsellor, my Comforter: My Loss is such, as that it cannot be made up to me by any Man upon Earth, but only by a God in Heaven, from whom came all that sweetness that I found in *Jonathan*, and in whom there is infinitely more.

Secondly, *By saying he was distressed, he giveth us to understand the deepness and intimacy of that sense which he had of this his Loss.* He felt it, for it went to the quick, and struck him to the very Heart; this was such a blow as he did not well know how to bear, he was troubled at it, and bowed down greatly, feeble and sore broken, so that he was scarce able to outlive it; therefore here he draws up the Floodgates, spends the strength of his Sorrow, pours out his last and heaviest groan. We may conceive him speaking thus to himself: I easily yield some Sorrow to be due to *Saul*, as bad as he was, because *Israels* King, chosen and appointed of God, one that had been *anointed with Oyl*, yet I can bear with his Death; for tho' he was King, and my Father-in-law, yet he was my irreconcileable Enemy, who hated me with a cruel hatred, and hunted me as *a Partridge upon the Mountains*, therefore his Death I look upon not as my Affliction, but Deliverance; accordingly some Tears I will drop over him, and bestow a sigh or two there, but can

soon

ſoon wipe mine eyes, and dry my Cheeks again, leaving ſorrow and mourning upon his account as a buſineſs more proper for them who find themſelves concern'd: 2 *Sam.* 1. 24. *Ye daughters of Jeruſalem, weep over Saul, who cloathed you in Scarlet, with other delights, who put on Ornaments of Gold upon your Apparel.* You have reaſon, for he was your Friend and Benefactor. As for mourning over *Jonathan*, that is my Province, my Buſineſs, and I undertake it, and will go about it with all my might, there is none to be found in *Iſrael* that I will truſt with it, none that can do it ſo well as my ſelf, there being none ſo much concerned, none ſo inwardly ſenſible, none ſo great a Sufferer, none ſo deeply wounded, I am diſtreſs'd for him, brought into a great ſtrait: While I had him, my Heart was enlarged with Love to him, and Joy in him; how did it flame, how did it leap, how ſtrong was my Affection, how high my Delight; but now he is gone, thoſe Comforts are gone with him; my Heart is pent and oppreſt, my Sun is ſet, and I am clouded, benighted, left alone to bemoan my ſelf. We have finiſhed the Doctrinal part, and now come to the Improvement of all in a way of Application: And there are only three things which I ſhall bring in as ſo many Corollaries, and ſpeak to, in order to the making the late Providence and my preſent Diſcourſe profitable to you.

USE 1. *From hence learn the weak ſlippery hold you have of all your worldly Comforts.* Tho' your Title to them be good, the beſt that can be, founded not only upon Providence, but Covenant, yet they may ſlip thro' your Fingers before you are aware, your Poſſeſſion is not ſure: Whatever ſweetneſs you taſte in them, whatever expectations you have from them, they may take their leave, and diſappoint you, thereby at once proving their own Vanity, and your Vexation. Hence they are called things *that are not*, becauſe they have ſo *little of being*, are of ſo *uncertain continuance*, and no further removed from nothing. They are here to Day looking pleaſantly, but may be gone to Morrow, yea before, and leave

you

you drown'd in Tears: Fragrant Flowers they are, by which you are at preſent greatly refreſhed, but know not how ſoon they may wither in your hands. You greatly rejoice in your loving Friends, dear Relations, faithful Miniſters, but their Breath is in their Noſtrils, and wherein are they to be accounted of? *Jonah* was exceeding glad of the Gourd, under the refrigerating ſhadow whereof he ſate comfortably and at eaſe in a ſcorching day, but a Worm ſmote it that it dyed, by this the good Man was tranſported into an exceſs of Paſſion, and diſordered throughout. *Job* complained not without Cauſe, *Job* 10. 17. that *Changes and Wars were upon him*, or *againſt* him; a multitude, a variety of Changes, they trod upon the heels of one another, ſo that he was at no time ſafe, knew not what a Settlement meant, could not ſay, the Morrow will be as this Day; nay, he could not commend one Day before the Night; the faireſt Morning he had ſeen overcaſt, and converted into a bluſtering Afternoon. He that hath the moſt Eagle-eye, and pierceth into Myſteries, cannot look into the Purpoſes of God concerning his preſent State, nor into the Womb of Providence, ſo as to tell aforehand what a Day will bring forth. The groſs Miſtakes of every Almanack about the Weather, proclaim the Impudence and Ignorance of the Star-gazers, and it is to be attributed to the Patience and Mercy of God that he doth not ſtrike thoſe *Diviners mad*. As God hath a variety of Mercies and Bleſſings, ſo that Day unto Day ſheweth Love, and Night unto Night Faithfulneſs, he compaſſeth his Children with Favour as a ſhield, loads them with Benefits, and we may ſay, many ſuch things are with him, ſo hath He great ſtore of Afflictions and Exerciſes for them too; an Houſe of Bondage, an howling Wilderneſs, and a red Sea. Before you have finiſhed your Courſe, paſs'd through the World, and enter'd into your Reſt, you may be ſure of Changes, but none of you can tell what thoſe Changes will be, how God will try you, nor in what Vein bleed you: Now through Mercy you have your Comforts, but know not how little awhile you ſhall have them, *Ruth* 1. 20, 21. *Call me not Naomi, call me Marah, for the Lord*

Lord hath dealt bitterly with me: I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: The Comforts of Life are not ſure, for Life it ſelf is not, that is at beſt a Vapour, and may be ſoon exhal'd. Upon this account, let the Advice I ſhall give in four things be acceptable to you.

Firſt, *Do not overvalue any of thoſe outward good things you have:* Do not withhold from them that which is meet. There is a Love and Delight due to them according to the ſeveral degrees of Excellency which they have, and of nearneſs in which they ſtand to you; this is a Debt you owe them, and what you owe you are obliged to pay, if you do not, Divine Juſtice may come upon you for it. Oh that you would wiſely conſider how dreadful and tormenting a thing it would be to you at the laſt, if Conſcience (which is now a Curious Obſerver of you, and all the Paſſages of your Lives) ſhould arreſt you, and ſay, Man, Woman, thou art now fetching thy laſt Breath, a dying Creature, ready to launch into Eternity, and to appear before the Tribunal of God; but know, thou dieſt deſperately in debt to thy Friends, thy Relations, and thy Family; thou haſt lived with them, and converſed with them, but not carried toward them as thou oughteſt to have done; thou didſt not abound in thoſe Expreſſions of Love which thou ſhouldeſt; nay, thou didſt want the Love it ſelf; thou didſt not take that Care of them thou ſhouldeſt, neither Care of their Bodies nor of their Souls: Indeed it is no wonder that their Souls were neglected by thee, ſince thou didſt not at all mind thine own, thou waſt not ſo kind to them as Civility would have taught thee to have been, but moroſe and chubbid; at one time thy Carriage was ſtrange, at another thou didſt put on the Countenance of a Fury; thy Words were carting like ſharp Swords, nor didſt thou hold thy Hands, but they lighted heavy upon the Wife of thy Boſom, (unnatural Brute as thou art) whom thou ſhouldeſt have been tender over, and loved as thine own fleſh. As for you that are herein guilty, I cannot but tell you, Your Relations now feel the want of your Love, and Care, and Kindneſs, but you will then feel the Smart and Horrour of your having

having been ſo willingly and wickedly wanting to your Duty: Therefore amend your wayes, and put away the evil of your doings from before the Eyes of God; learn your Duty, and chearfully apply to the doing of it, do it all, do it more and more, take Delight and Pleaſure in doing it: Love them, love to Love them, let your Love continue, let it abound, convince them of your loving them, that whatever other wants they may have, they may be ſure of this, that they do not want your Love.

But ſtill, do not overdo: Love God as much as ever you can, becauſe him you cannot love too much; you cannot beſtow too much upon him to whom you owe more than all you have amounts to, therefore there give your Affections their full liberty, lay the Reins upon their Neck; but when you have to do with Creatures, take heed to your ſelves, and love with Caution; let there be a true, honeſt and faithful Heart, but yet a weaned Heart. There is a great difference between *Endearing* and *Doting*, ſtudy and practiſe the former, avoid the latter, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. *It remaineth that they that have Wives be as though they had none:* And the ſame is to be ſaid of others, Let thoſe that have Husbands be as tho' that had none, and they that have Children, and they that have Brethren, Siſters and Friends: Too much Love layes a foundation, and makes way for too much Sorrow; if while you have Comforts you are not as tho' you had none, I am ſure, when *you weep*, you will not be *as though you wept not:* Alas you will ſcarce find in your Heart how to reſign that which you have fixed your Heart upon. In ſuch a Caſe, and unto ſuch a Perſon, the taking away of a Comfort, or the diſſolving of a Relation will be not as the putting off a Garment, but rending the very Caul of your Heart.

Secondly, *Wiſely and carefully Improve your Comforts while you have them:* Be as good Husbands as poſſibly you may, they may not abide long with you, therefore while they do, ſuffer them not to lye dead upon your hands. Have you Friends and Relations? draw from them all poſſible Soul advantages; labour you to be the better for them, and do your utmoſt

utmoſt, that they may be the better for you; be mutually helpful one to another, quickening, warming, ſtrengthening one another, provoking to Love and Good Works. That Proverb is not to be ſlighted, for Wiſdom is in it, *Make Hay while the Sun ſhines.* By preſent Diligence prevent thoſe idle and unprofitable Wiſhes that come too late; *Oh that I had been wiſer, Oh that I had done ſo and ſo.* Do you now, and every Day think and repeat the Thoughts of this, who have Husbands and Wives, Brethren and Siſters, Children and Servants, Miniſters and People; and you that walk together in an Holy Communion, meeting in the ſame Aſſembly, attending upon the ſame Ordinances, and ſitting at the ſame Table, and let theſe Thoughts be mighty in their Operation.

And as it ought to be thus with reference to your Friends and Relations, ſo to your Eſtates and Poſſeſſions. Many are all the Year round digging like Moles in the Earth, ſcraping, raking and heaping up of Riches, as if there would be no end of their days, but they ſhould *live here alway*: Like the Horſeleeches Daughter, they never ſay it is enough, as ſome never think they have *ſinn'd enough*, but drink in Iniquity like Water, and draw it with Cart-ropes; ſo theſe never think they have *got enough*, in the fulneſs of their ſufficiency they apprehend themſelves in ſtraits. Would theſe Perſons hearken to me, I would adviſe them to be ready to communicate, and do all the Good they can to others, ſince they do not know *how ſoon they may die*, and ſo have no more Opportunities for Charity and Uſefulneſs in the World. By Acts of bountiful Compaſſion make ſure of ſomething conſiderable, that you may *carry with you*, before Death comes to take you from all, and *all from you: What thy hand findeth to do*, either in Works of Piety or Charity, ſpeed the doing of it, *do it with all thy might*, conſidering *there is no work, nor device, nor invention in the Grave, whither thou art going*, Eccl. 9. 10.

Thirdly, *Provide for Changes*: Expect them, and arm your ſelves, that when they come, they may not do you a fa-

tal Miſchief. Do not ſay as *David* did in his Proſperity, 30 *Pſalm. 6. I ſhall never be moved*, tho' thou thinkeſt *the Lord by his favour hath made thy mountain to ſtand ſtrong*. Dream not of ſuch a ſettlement upon Earth, as knoweth no ſhaking, thou mayſt quickly be moved, and thy Mountain too; thy *Mountain*, as big as it looks, may dwindle, and ſhrink it ſelf up into a *Molehill*, or the hand of Divine Providence may take it and caſt it into a *Sea of Trouble*. Notwithſtanding the height of his Confidence, he ſoon found it ſo, and in the next words hath left his Experience upon Record, for the teaching us to cheriſh in our ſelves more ſolid and ſober thoughts, *Thou didſt hide thy Face, and I was troubled*. God doth not need to arm againſt us, nor throw his Thunderbolts, it is but hiding of his Face, that is enough to cover us with the ſhadow of Death, and put all into Confuſion; and this, or any thing elſe that God pleaſeth to do, may be done in the twinkling of an Eye: Therefore under the warmeſt and moſt comfortable *Beams of Divine Favour*, under the brighteſt ſhinings forth of the Face of God, we ſhould think of a Cloud, and in the higheſt *Spring tide of Creature comforts* prepare for as low an Ebb. It doth not indeed upon any account become us to give way unto *thoſe Fears*, that would deprive us of the comfort of our Enjoyments; nor when God hath put a Cup of Conſolation into our hands go about to imbitter it to our ſelves with the frightful apprehenſions of that which may never be. But it is our Wiſdom in the ſereneſt day, and when there is Peace round about, to cheriſh *thoſe prudent fears* which may enable us to look Terror in the Face, without being diſtracted by it, and to endure evil, without having our Hearts broken by it. There is nothing loſt, no hurt done by a calm, ſedate propounding difficult Caſes to our ſelves. As thus: Now I am full, but I may be emptyed as from Veſſel to Veſſel. Now I am cloathed with Silk and beautiful Garments, but God may ſtrip me of theſe, and put Sackcloth upon my Loins: Now I have a convenient ſtately Houſe, richly hung and furniſhed, but Sons of Violence may

break

break in and ſteal, or a Fire may burn it down to the ground, ſo that I ſhall not have where to lay mine head: Now I have a dear and Loving Husband who careth for me, but I may loſe him, and be brought to a State of deſolate Widowhood: Now I have enough, and to ſpare, an overplus for the relief of the Poor, but the time may come wherein I ſhall want Neceſſaries, and *pine away, ſtricken thrô for lack of the fruits of the Field.* My Soul, how wilt thou be able to bear up, if it ſhould pleaſe God to bring it to this? Thou *knoweſt how to abound* with Joy, and to eat thy Bread at a plentiful Table with a merry Heart; but doſt thou know how to be contented in a time of Want and Scarcity, and to rejoyce in the God of thy Salvation in a Day of Famine, as the Holy Prophet could, 3 *Habbuk.* 17, 18.

Fourthly, *Seek for, and diligently look after thoſe things which you cannot loſe, nor be deprived of.* In the midſt of the uncertainty you live at, as to all the Comforts of this preſent World, *make ſure of ſomething*; I mean, ſomething that is worth your pains to get, and that it is your intereſt to keep. In the 17 *Pſalm* 14. we read of the Men of the World, that *their Bellies are fill'd with hid treaſures*; and poſſibly ſo is their Bags, and their Cheſts, and their Houſes too, all full, and that not of Traſh, but Treaſure: But poor Creatures, this is their Miſery, that *they have their Portion in this Life.* They have a Portion, and it looks great, makes an huge noiſe, but alas! it is only *in*, and *for his Life.* We read alſo of the *ſure mercies of David*, 55 Iſa. 3. *Incline your ear, and come unto me, hear, and your Soul ſhall live, and I will make an everlaſting Covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of David*; now be you ſo wiſe as to mind them. It is very good to be ſure, excellent to have that which is ſo. *Chriſt* told *Martha*, in a way of friendly Reproof to her, that *Mary* her Siſter *had choſen the good part, which ſhould never be taken from her*; neither by God, who was *too good* to do it, nor by Men and Devils, who were *too weak*: That was a wiſe Choice, be you perſwaded to make it. Take not up with that which may leave you, and which ſooner or later you muſt

leave. Sit not down with any thing that Thieves may break thro', and ſteal, or that Moths can corrupt, or Ruſt can fret, or Time ſhall ſee the end of. Look out for *Chriſt*, who is *the everlaſting Father, and able to ſave to the utmoſt* of your Needs, and Dangers, and Deſires, and of Eternity too; pray for the *Spirit*, he will *abide with you for ever*; *Grace* will grow up to Glory, and *Holineſs* bring you to an Happineſs that knows neither meaſure nor end. Follow the Noble Example which was ſet you by the Holy Apoſtles, and Primitive Chriſtians taught of God, who 2 *Corinth.* 4. 18. *Looked not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen, becauſe the things which are ſeen are Temporal, but the things which are not ſeen are Eternal.* Spiritual Bleſſings in heavenly places, and things, are of all good things the beſt, and alſo the moſt laſting. *Riches and Honour are with Wiſdom*: But what! ſuch Riches as take unto themſelves wings, and flee away, ſuch Honour as is a vain and vaniſhing breath? No, no; *durable Riches and Righteouſneſs*, 8 Prov. 18. When all worldly Enjoyments take their laſt Farewell, leaving you for ever, you need not look upon your ſelves as Perſons undone, but ſay, for all this *the lines are fallen unto me in a pleaſant place*; ſtill I have a *God* here, and I ſhall have an *Heaven* hereafter.

USE 2. Learn, that *it is both the Duty and Intereſt of Perſons in Relation, to ſtudy and endeavour the being pleaſant to one another.* *Jonathan* was ſo to his Brother *David*, and by being ſo, *He obtained a good Report*, in the Text, *Very pleaſant haſt thou been unto me.* This is a fair and lovely Copy for us to Write after, drawn by an excellent Hand; let us all imitate it, and come up to it as near as we can: Whether we ſtand in Natural or Civil, or Church Relation, whether Conjugal, Parental, or Filial; whether we are Maſters, Miſtreſſes, Servants, Fellow-Citizens, or Church-Members, let us labour to ſweeten that Relation, and to render our ſelves as eaſie and acceptable as poſſibly may be to one another, that we may not be as Thorns in one anothers ſides, nor pricks in

one anothers eyes; there will be *Aloes* enough, we had need bring good ſtore of *Honey*. It is an excellent Command the Scripture gives, *Follow peace with all Men*, go and do it; follow Peace *abroad*, tho' it run from you follow it, but be ſure to *keep Peace at home*; yea, not only Peace, but Pleaſantneſs too, and both theſe are to be found in the ways of Wiſdom, 3. *Prov.* 17. *Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace: See then that ye walk circumſpectly, not as fools, but as wiſe.* A great deal of benefit will be the fruit and effect hereof; your Relations will have the Comfort of it while Providence continues you with them, and ſo will your ſelves alſo: and beſides that, you will have the Comfort of it when you come to die, a reflection thereupon will be exceeding cordial, and over and above you will have the Honour of it after Death. *Nabal* was a very *Chub*, a moroſe and ill-natur'd Fellow; Well, what did his *Servants* ſay of him behind his back while he lived, ſee 1 *Samuel* 25. 17. *He is ſuch a Son of Belial, that a Man cannot ſpeak to him:* And what did his *prudent Wife* ſay of him after he was dead, 25 Verſe of the ſame Chapter, *Let not my Lord regard this man of Belial, even Nabal, for as his Name is, ſo is he, Nabal is his Name, and folly is with him*; whereas by your being pleaſant to your Friends and Relations, you will raiſe *a Monument* to your own Honour, far better than *Abſolam's Pillar*; and tho' your Body will corrupt in the Grave, and return to Duſt, yet your Name *will be embalmed, and your Memory bleſſed.* And to this end I commend to you by way of Advice, theſe three things, deſiring you to put them in practice.

Firſt, *Let your Love be ſincere, hearty, conſtant and free*; a ſelf-evidencing Love, that there may be more ground and reaſon to believe it than your *bare ſay ſo:* Be ſure that your Relation carry along with it all the Affection that it calls for, and all the deſireable fruits of that Affection. It is this, my Friends, that makes every thing ſavoury, and puts a good reliſh into it; take this away, and all that remains is nothing elſe but bitterneſs. What is *Communion and Cohabitation* without Love, but a conſtant Burden? And what are

Servi-

Services but ungrateful? and what is it that makes them ſo, when they are good in themſelves? Nothing but their coming from ſuch an hand. The *Conjugal Yoke* will be very heavy, and pinch and gall if it be not lin'd with Love: and is there not reaſon? Did not God reject and abhorr all that the hypocritical and profane *Jews* did in his worſhip upon this very account, becauſe he knew they did not love him: *Iſai.* 29. 13. *This People draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their Heart far from me.* And for that cauſe he delighted not in the blood of Bullocks, or Rams, or He-goats, but their Oblations were Vain, their Incenſe an Abomination, and their ſolemn Meetings Iniquity. Why was *Jonathan* ſo very pleaſant to *David?* The words immediately following the Text tell us, *Thy Love to me was wonderful.*

Secondly, *Labour for, and in all your Converſes be expreſſive of a ſweetneſs of Temper*; there is without peradventure, a great deal lieth in the Natural Diſpoſition. Many Perſons, who are enriched with the true Grace of God, are notwithſtanding that, Burdens to *themſelves*, and very uneaſie to *their Friends*, becauſe of the Untowardneſs of their Temper. I have heard of a Perſon very Eminent for his Place and Learning, yea and Godlineſs too, of whom yet it was ſaid, *Tho' he had Grace enough for ten men, he had not Grace enough for himſelf*: The Soil was rank, and the Weeds that grew in it got to ſuch an height, that too often they overtopt the Divine Plantation. Is it not too ordinary and common to find ſome Imperious and Lordly, others fretful and peeviſh? *Some are Lions, and others are Waſps*; every little thing almoſt unhingeth, and puts them out of humour; they are angry for Trifles, the very wagging of a Feather, by no means enduring a contradiction in their Speeches, or a being croſt in their Wills; but all muſt ſtudy their Humour, and comply with it, otherwiſe they will be all on a Flame, and ſoon make the Houſe too hot: But this will not do, they are to be *greatly condemned*, and thoſe that live with them to be as *greatly pitied*, ſpecially thoſe that are *ſtak'd down*, and muſt bide by

by it. The Lord give them of his Comforts, for indeed they have Croſs enough. As for you that are ſo much Friends to your ſelves, as to deſire a being pleaſant to thoſe that are concerned with you, labour to file off this Ruggedneſs; rectifie your own Spirits, conquer your ſelves, pray and labour for a Maſtery over your unruly Paſſions. Get that *meek and quiet ſpirit, which is an Ornament of great price in the ſight of God*, 1 Pet. 3. 4. A ſingular Friend of mine, by nature haſty and furious, attained to ſo great a Victory over himſelf, by Prayer, Reading of and Meditation upon the Hiſtory of Chriſt, that none could put him into a Diſcompoſure. Make you uſe of the ſame Remedy, remembring; that which is to ſweeten other things, muſt it ſelf be much more ſo. Wormwood and Gall are very improper Means for ſo excellent an End.

Thirdly, *Give diligence that ye may know the whole duty of your place, and make Conſcience of doing whatſoever you know to be ſo.* Contribute all that is within the compaſs and reach of your Power, to the ſpiritual, eternal good, and temporal comfort of thoſe with whom you have to do. It is a very good Commendation which *Lemuel*'s Mother gives of a *virtuous Woman*, 31 Prov. 26. That *ſhe opens her mouth with wiſdom*, and *in her Tongue is the Law of Kindneſs.* She hath a Liberty to ſpeak, it is her right, but ſhe uſeth it with diſcretion and affection; and when her Lips are opened, ſpecially to her Husband, they drop like an Honey-comb: There you ſee the amiableneſs of her Temper and Converſation. But that is not all, there was another *curious ſtroke* given in her Picture before, a choice Character in the 12*th.* Verſe, *She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.* She is carefull to avoid doing evil, ready and conſtant in doing good, yea all the good ſhe can, being, as *Paul* would have every one, *unwearied in well-doing.* Oh! this is a noble Life, what our precious *Lord and Saviour* led while upon Earth: *He went up and down doing good*, therein leaving us an Example, that we may tread in his ſteps. Do good, all of you, in thoſe *ſeveral places* in which Providence hath ſet you, all the good you

can,

can, fill them up with Love and Duty; and do good to the *ſeveral Perſons* you have to do with: Let nothing be wanting in you in order to their being really the better for you, their Souls being the better for you, that they may have cauſe to ſay, Bleſſed be God that ever I lived in ſuch a Family, that ever I had ſuch a Wife, was married to ſuch an Husband, deſcended of ſuch Parents, ſerved ſuch a Maſter and Miſtreſs. You will then be *pleaſant* indeed, when you are *profitable*, when you teach the Ignorant, and reduce the Wanderer; when you enlighten the dark Mind, and blow up the languiſhing Flame; when you ſtrengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble Knees. And I beſeech you, ſeriouſly conſider with your ſelves, why God did make the Woman, and order out the Conjugal Relation; and we may ſay the ſame of others: It was that Perſons in thoſe Relations might be *Helps meet for one another.* And truly that Perſon lives to no *purpoſe*, that doth not live to *good purpoſe*; and he doth not live to *good Purpoſe*, who doth not live *to that Purpoſe* for which God made him, and ſent him, and ſet him in the place where he is: That perſon who is an uſeleſs Veſſel, I do not, and you need not wonder, if he *be a Veſſel in which there is no pleaſure.* All that know him, may look upon him as an unprofitable burden to the Earth, and ſo he may be to his Friends, for he doth nothing elſe but take up a room, and cumber the ground.

USE *Third.*

Since the taking away of pleaſant things doth bring Saints themſelves in diſtreſs, we may learn how weak, impotent and inconſiderable a Creature man is. The Royal Prophet tells us, 39 *Pſal.* 5. *Verily every man at his beſt ſtate is altogether Vanity.* This is a Truth, I have ſearched it, I have found it, I am ſure of it; Verily it is ſo, not onely *ſome men*, thoſe that are poor and ſickly and ſilly, but *every man*, the youngeſt, the ſtrongeſt, the wiſeſt, the moſt holy; and that not only at ſome times, and in ſome Conditions, when he is diſeaſed and diſcompos'd, but *at his beſt ſtate*, when he is moſt himſelf, when his Faculties and Powers of Soul and Body are raiſed up to the

the higheſt pitch, and moſt in tune for work, then, even then, *He is vanity*. He not only hath ſome Vanity in him, ſome mixture of vanity, ſome Droſs with his Gold, ſome Water with his Wine, but He *is vanity*: He may e'en be defined by it; nay more, He is *altogether* Vanity, it overſpreads him, it runs through the whole, from the ſole of the Foot to the Crown of the Head he is Vanity. *In ſe uno omne genus vanitatis complectitur*: In himſelf alone he contains all ſorts of Vanity: If any one is loſt, it may be found again in Man. The ſeveral and manifold *lines* of Vanity meet in Man as in the *Centre* of them. The Doctrin we have been diſcourſing of, is one proof and Evidence hereof. *David* was a good Man, a godly Man, a man after Gods own Heart, a Man of War, a man of Mettal and courage; when but a Stripling, he did not fear *Goliah* an huge and mighty Gyant, before whom all *Iſrael* trembled; yet when God was pleaſed to deprive him of his Friend and Brother, to take from him his *Jonathan*, he was diſtreſſed. How great Strangers are all of us at home, and how much unacquainted with our ſelves! It is very uſual for good men to be miſtaken about themſelves, and that among others in theſe two caſes: *They do not know how much they can do and ſuffer, when God is with them*: That which to them ſeem'd intolerable at a diſtance, feels light when upon them; they can ſing under that which they thought would have broken their Hearts. Hence a good man once ſaid, *I was in Priſon till I was in Priſon*. On the other ſide, *They do not know how little they can do or ſuffer, if God be pleaſed to ſubduct from them, and cometh not in to their aſſiſtance*. This made confident *Peter* tell our Lord, *Though all men ſhould deny him, yet he would not*; whereas, when the Temptation came, though *Judas* betrayed him, and the *reſt of the Diſciples* forſook him, yet *Peter* was the only man of them that denyed him. But let us return to the buſineſs before us. Afflictive Providences may, and oft-times do, bring the beſt Saints into diſtreſſes; and thoſe not only *outward* in their Condition, ſo that they ſhall be compaſt about with Difficulties, and hemm'd in on every

ſide, as *Iſrael* was at the *Red Sea*; but likewiſe *inward* in their ſpirits, ſo as to be brought to their Wits-end, and almoſt to their Faiths end; they know not which way to turn them, nor what courſe to ſteer: They are at a loſs both how to bear the Affliction upon them, and what to do in the caſe.

Firſt, *Afflictions, ſuch afflictions may be order'd to good men, as may bring them into thoſe diſtreſſes that they ſhall not know how to bear it.* This is often ſeen and felt. *David* did not know how to bear the Death of *Abſalom*, but went up and down like a Bedlam, wringing his hands, and crying, *Would God I had died for thee, O Abſalom, my Son, my Son*, 2 Sam. 18. 33. *Jonah* could not bear the non-fulfilling of his Prophecy concerning the Deſtruction of *Niniveh*, nor the withering of his Gourd, for *he would have had God take his Life from him*, and told him to his Face, *He did well to be angry, even unto Death*, 4 *Jonah* 3, and 9 Verſes. Thus the ſpirit is roil'd, the Patience is ſpent, and the Heart fires and flames. In the 73 *Pſalm*, holy *Aſaph* ſeeing the Proſperity and flouriſhing ſtate of the Wicked, while he was daily under a preſſing load of Afflictions, and the violent hurries of Temptation, cried out, *Ver.* 26. That *his Fleſh and his heart failed.* Have not ſome of us heard poor Creatures under ſome ſore and heavy blow given them by the hand of God, crying out in the Agony and bitter Anguiſh of their ſpirits, *This is ſuch a loſs I cannot bear it?* Little *conſidering* that *Job* did bear more than is laid upon them, and when all was gone at a Clap, fell down and worſhipped, ſaying, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken, bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.* Neither do they conſider, that nothing is happened to them, but *what is common to man*; and what reaſon is there for *extraordinary paſſions*, when there is nothing but *ordinary Providences.* Once more, they do not *conſider*, what the Apoſtle ſaith, *viz.* That *God is faithful, who will not ſuffer his People to be tempted above what they are able*, but will ſo graciouſly and tenderly order that they *ſhall be able to bear it.* Forbear ſuch Expreſſions. The Church underſtood her ſelf, and ſpake very wiſely when ſhe ſaid, 7 *Micah* 9. *I will bear the Indig-*

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nation of the Lord: And if ſhe could bear *indignation*, you may very well reſolve to bear *affliction*.

Secondly, *Afflictions do ſometimes bring good men into ſuch afflictions, as that they do not know what to do under them.* That is an uſual cry, Things are ſo and ſo with me, that I cannot tell what to do: I do not know in all the World what I ſhall do. And indeed it muſt needs be exceeding ſad with that Perſon who is brought to ſuch a loſs: Now I ſhall ſay theſe two things to ſuch Perſons as theſe are.

Firſt, *Thoſe diſtreſſes which amount to this, are too much, and riſe to too great an height*; and you may thank your ſelves for them. Be the affliction which you meet with what it will, it is not too much, nor too great; not ſuch as God could have laid on, nor as you did deſerve: So *Ezra* acknowledged in his 9*th.* Chapt. 13 *v. Thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs than our Iniquities deſerve.* Remember it is of Gods ordering out, *all whoſe wayes are Mercy and Truth, to them that fear his Name, and keep his Covenant*; who doth all things to his People with Wiſdom and in Love, meaſuring out the Potion, and weighing the Burden, that there may not be a grain more than is neceſſary and fit. But this ſore diſtreſs is a great deal too much, into which thou haſt thrown thy ſelf by thy unbelief and Impatience.

What meaneſt thou by ſaying, *This I cannot bear?* from whom comes it? *Was it not from God?* and if from God, it is thy Duty to bear it. The Lord Jeſus knew better, and ſpake better, when He ſaid, *Shall I not drink of the Cup which my Father hath given me to drink of?* 18 *Joh.* 11. and *how will you avoid it?* how can you help your ſelves? Can you ſhake off the burden? If not, you muſt bear it. *Thine arrows ſtick faſt in me*, ſaid *David*, 38 Pſal: 2. *v.* Yes, too faſt for him to pull out with all the ſtrength he had. See to it, that you bear it becomingly, ſubmiſſively, like a Child whoſe will is bowed to the Will of God, and ſwallowed up by it. *Let Patience have its perfect work.* Be the preſent load what it will, if you will not bear it, *you take a Courſe to bring upon your ſelves an heavier.* What doth a wild Bull in a Net do when he toſſeth, and kicks, and flings, but intangles himſelf the more? He had better be quiet.

Again, Art thou thy ſelf when thou ſayeſt, *I know not what to do?* Have you been *in the School of Chriſt*, and taught of God, and yet ſuch a Dunce as not to know what to do? You ought to know and do too. *Your work* is before you, and will you not ſee it? I beſeech you to ſit down, and recollect your ſelves, ſeriouſly commune with your own Hearts, propound the Queſtion, What is the will of God concerning me? There is no State or Condition in which you are or can be, but therein you may find ſomething, yea enough to do. You may do ſomething to pleaſe and honour God, and ſomething to help and profit your ſelves: You may therein ſet Faith at work, and Patience at work: A time of Affliction is the proper ſeaſon for thoſe Graces to yield their Fruit, thoſe Spices to flow forth. Now act ſubmiſſion to the Divine Will: *Here am I, let him do what ſeemeth good unto him*: Fall to Improving of the Affliction, get Meat out of the Eater, *Honey from the Carkaſe of the Lion*, that what hath devoured thy Comforts, may feed thy Graces; ſee if you cannot by an *holy Chimiſtry* extract Gains out of Loſſes, and turn Iron into Gold: Try what advantage you can make of the Sickneſs that conſumes you, of the pain that grinds and tortures you; what Life you can fetch out of the Grave, the death of ſuch a Friend or Relation; there is no Affliction with which we are exerciſed, but it puts into our hands an opportunity for ſome ſpecial work or other; there is no Condition but what hath a particular duty belonging to it. Do not ſay, I am now altogether uſeleſs and unſerviceable; who is it that hath made thee ſo? God hath not, have a care thou doſt not make thy ſelf ſo: What thô thy Work doth not lie where it did, it lieth ſomewhere, find it out, and do it.

I moſt freely and readily grant, you cannot do your preſent Duty, nor any thing elſe *in your own ſtrength*, as it ought to be done. You cannot ſtir a Finger without Divine Concurrence, nor lift up a Prayer, unleſs the Spirit ſet his hand to it; there muſt be an helping of the Infirmity, elſe no performance of the Duty. It is one above that *worketh both to will and to do, of his own good pleaſure*: But however, go you about your Work, ſet to it heartily, and in good earneſt, *going for*

ſtrength

ſtrength where it is to be had: Seek it in, and from *Chriſt*, in whom it is laid up for you. To this purpoſe, for your Encouragement, remember that of *Paul* in the 4 *Phil.* 13. *I can do all things thrô Chriſt, who ſtrengtheneth me.* Upon the gracious conveyances of Life, Spirit and Power from Chriſt, he is able to do the work of a Chriſtian, and of an Apoſtle, to reſiſt Temptation, to bear Affliction, and glory in Tribulation: He was able wiſely to improve what he had, and willingly to part with it; able to *deny himſelf*, and yet *enjoy himſelf*, when he had done ſo. In ſhort, while you bitterly complain, that you know not what to do, have a care you *do not overdo*, in inflaming your own wounds, afflicting and ſinking your own Spirits, when the hand of God hath touched you.

Secondly, *Labour to extricate your ſelves, and with all poſſible ſpeed procure your own deliverance and enlargement out of theſe Diſtreſſes.* Submit to the Loſs God hath order'd out to you, and to the Affliction with which you are exerciſed: Hath he brought you into the Duſt, lay your Mouths there, and lie quietly till he bring you forth to the light, and ſhew you his Smiles and Salvation; but get out of the diſtreſs as faſt as may be, only ſee that it be in the right way. Be content that a Storm ſhould be upon thy Tabernacle as long as God will have it there, but command thy Soul to be ſilent, and ſtill, and as ſoon as thou canſt, recover the calm of thy Spirit. *Our Lord and Saviour* of his own accord came to do the Will of his Father, and without heſitancy yielded to a ſuffering Condition, not running from it to the laſt, but breathing out his laſt upon a Croſs, but his Agony did not laſt long; very *ſharp* indeed it was, ſo that therein he ſweat drops of Blood, but it was *ſhort*, and quickly went over again, and in all his after Trials he expreſſed a full and moſt ſweet Compoſure of Soul, and carried it with a true greatneſs of Spirit. There ſhould be in us *a due ſenſe of Loſſes and Afflictions*; otherwiſe we ſhall be guilty of offering an Affront unto God, and putting a ſlight upon him; and we ſhall prejudice our ſelves by not fetching that good out of an Action which we might: But ſtill we muſt be careful to moderate our grief as much as poſſibly we can, both as to *degree* and *duration*, returning to a right and even Temper. It is moſt honourable for the Chriſtian, and comfortable to him, when *Grace* doth that which *Time* will. In order hereunto, I adviſe theſe four things.

Firſt, *Eaſe your ſelves in a way of Prayer.* It is indeed very good, when an Oppreſſed Perſon can *broach* the Veſſel, and give his Sorrow *vent* in Tears: I my ſelf have known ſome (among others an

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Eminent and Noble Lady) ſo full of Sorrow, that their Hearts were ready to break, relieved by Weeping, when all their Friends that came to Comfort them, prov'd *Phyſicians of no value*; but the beſt, and moſt excellent way, is *to mingle Tears and Prayers together.* Weep over your Afflictions if you can, but withal go and tell your Father of them, pouring out the Complaints and Deſires of your Souls into his Boſom. Poor *Hannah* was in great diſtreſs, having an Adverſary in the Houſe with her, who multiplied provocations *to make her fret*, whereupon ſhe became *bitter of Soul:* In that Caſe ſhe tried what God would do, and ſought unto him, 1 *Samuel* 1. 10. *She wept ſore*; that ſhe could not help, nor did ſhe endeavour it, Tears have their Rhetorick, but *ſhe alſo prayed:* And O! how much did ſhe gain by it, what abundance of Peace, what Quietneſs and Comfort did her Prayer fetch into her! It is ſaid, *ver.* 18. *She went away, and her Countenance was no more ſad:* While ſhe was praying, God gave her a Gracious Smile, a look of Love, and ſhe was a cheerful Woman ever after. Faith and Prayer will do the work, notwithſtanding the difficulties of it, and ſcatter the Clouds, be they never ſo thick. The more a gracious Soul relies on God in a way of Believing, and ſeeks him in a way of humble, fervent Supplication, the eaſier will every Burden be to it, the lighter every Affliction, and the more comfortable every Condition.

Secondly, *Put the moſt fair and candid ſenſe you can upon Providences*; and make the beſt interpretation of every thing God doth with you. We ſhould have both *Honourable* Thoughts of it, and *Amicable* too, for He is too *Righteous* to do *wrong* to any of his *Creatures*, and too *Gracious* to do *hurt* to any of his *Children.* When our *Lord* had open'd the Ears of the Deaf Man, and loos'd his Tongue, the People ſaid *7 Mark* 37. *He hath done all things well:* ſay the ſame of God, for it is true: He doth not fail in any of his Undertakings, nor miſcarry in any of the works of his hands, but doth all things like himſelf, like a God. Do not only aſſert this of his Providences *in General*, but bring it down, and apply it to *particular* Diſpenſations. He hath done well *in this*, and well *in that*, 119 *Pſalm* 65. *Thou haſt dealt well with thy Servant, O Lord, according to thy Word:* 71 Verſe, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted.* 75. *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me*; Go ye, and do likewiſe. He hath done well in *emptying* me, for had I continued full, I might have grown proud, and *denied him, ſaying, who is the Lord:* He hath done well in taking my *Husband*, my *Father*, my *Teacher* from me, for being *ripe* for Heaven, he was *gathered.* He had finiſhed that Work which was given him to do; and it is more than a thouſand pities that a Good Man ſhould outlive his Work, or ſtay in a place where he hath nothing to do: It is pity but that a Faithful

ful Servant of Chriſt, when he hath diſpatch'd the buſineſs he came for, ſhould forthwith be taken up to his Reſt, and have an entrance granted him into *the Joy of his Lord:* Believe this alſo, That in all God's dealings with you, he intends you a Kindneſs; if a *Raven* be ſent to *Elijah*, it ſhall carry *Food* for him; the very *Rod* bloſſoms with *Love*, and bears the *peaceable fruit of Righteouſneſs*. *Jacob* was miſtaken, when he ſaid, 42 *Gen.* 36. *All theſe things are againſt me:* Good Man, he little knew then what God was doing for him. Do you rather ſay with *Paul*, 8 *Romans* 28. *We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God*; this ſhall work ſo, and that likewiſe.

Thirdly, *Look off from the Afflictions you feel, to the mercies you have*; from the Comforts you have *loſt*, to thoſe that are yet *left*. God might have ſtript you of all, for you have made frequent forfeitures. We took notice before of God's dealing with *Upright Job*, who in a little time was deprived of all, brought to the Aſhes, having his Body over and above ſmitten with ſore Boils, from the ſole of his Foot, even to his Crown, yet had he then ſomething *left* him for his Support and Comfort, *viz. The witneſs of his Conſcience*. Tho' his Wife was very unkind, a Thorn in his ſide, and ſpake bitterly, when ſhe bade him *Curſe God, and die*; yet *Conſcience* was within him like a Bird of *Paradiſe* that ſung ſweetly, while it told him, he was not wicked, and bare Teſtimony to his Integrity. God hath taken from you an Husband, a Father, a Wife, a Mother, a Child, one Child after another, a dear Brother or Siſter, a faithful Friend, a diligent Labourer in the Vineyard: But ask your ſelves the Queſtion, what hath God left me? And be ſure that the preſent Loſs, be it what it will, do not ſo corrupt and vitiate thy Palate, as that thou ſhouldeſt not *taſte* the remaining Mercy: Rather let the Mercy which remains influence thy Spirit to the alleviating of the preſent Loſs, and enabling thee to bear thy Burden the better. Poſſibly ſome here have loſt the Husband, or Father is dead, Eſtate is ſpent, Debtors are broke, Trade fails, all is gone, and no viſible way for a Livelihood. Be it ſo, yet there is *ſomething left for you*; namely, a *God*, can you not live upon him? Cannot you rejoyce in him? You may read of one that could, 3 *Habbuk.* 17, 18. and you have *Promiſes* left, which are *exceeding great and precious:* Go feed upon them, believe them, plead them, and turn them into Prayer.

Laſtly, *Often relieve your ſelves with Meditations upon the fulneſs and ſweetneſs of Chriſt*. Was *Jonathan* pleaſant to *David?* how pleaſant then is *Jeſus*, far more than *Jonathan* was, or ever could have been? And tho' *Jonathan* be dead, yet *Jeſus* is riſen. He is ſaid to *rejoyce over his Church as the Bridegroom over the Bride:* And he ſaith, 7 *Cant.* 6. *How fair and how pleaſant art thou, O love, for delights!* And ſhall not

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Saints reckon Christ so? They that know what he is, and what Communion with him is, do, and will witness with the Spouse in 1 *Cant.* 16. *Behold! thou art fair, my Beloved, yea, and pleasant.* O, *how fair* must he needs be, who is the Sun of Righteousness, who outshines all the Beauties in the World, all the Angels in Heaven, and who is *the brightness of his Fathers Glory, the express Image of his Person*, 1 Heb. 3. And *how pleasant* must he needs be, who puts a *sweetness into our worst things*, so that the Saints have *taken joyfully the spoiling of their goods*, 10 Heb. 34. and *a deliciousness into their best things.* It is He that makes *Truths sweet*, being the Marrow of the Gospel; and *Ordinances* sweet, they are but the *Dishes*, he the *Feast.* It is He that makes *Heaven sweet:* What would that place be without his Company? There indeed Saints are, and shall be without Sin, and without Sorrow, above Affliction, and above Temptation; all this is very good, but that which *commends it*, and is its self yet better, is, they shall there *be with Christ.* 14 *Joh.* 3. *Where I am, there ye shall be also*: And said *Paul*, 1 *Phil. I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better.* Yea, it is Christ that *commends God himself to us*, for *out of him he is a consuming Fire, and everlasting burnings*; 33 Isa. 14. We could not endure his Presence. *In him* He is reconciled, *a Father of Mercies, and God of Comforts*, 2 Cor. 1. 3. So that he must needs be pleasant, and with this comfort your selves: Whoever is dead, whatever is gone, you have Christ still, who hath said, *He will not leave you comfortless, but will come to you.*

It may now be expected I should speak something concerning *my Dear Brother*, who fought a good Fight, kept the Faith, served his Generation according to the Will of God, and hath now finished his Course; but there is no need, his Works praise him: You have known his Doctrine, and manner of Life, and so have others who were gainers by his Ministry, being begotten, nourished and built up by the Gospel he Preached. Take therefore what I shall say in short; thus: He was well accomplished with Learning, and furnished for the Work to which God had call'd him. His Abilities and stock of Knowledge were very considerable, as they found who conversed with him. He was, I am perswaded, truly Gracious, an humble Christian, a profitable Preacher, an able Catechist, and a Faithful Friend: He was a wise Man, and a Man of Peace, one that did adorn his Profession by his unreproveable and exemplary Conversation. God hath been pleased to take him from us, I do bewail my Loss, and so do many of you yours: But he had done his Work, and is now, I doubt not, taking an Everlasting Rest in the Bosom of his dearest Lord. *His Faith let us follow, considering the end of his Conversation.*

FINIS.